Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DOHA 00203 281149Z

21
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

SAM-01 /059 W
---------- 058161
R 281110Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1288
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCWT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D EN T I A L DOHA 0203

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, QA, EG, XF
SUBJ: PRESIDENT SADAT'S VISIT TO QATAR

1. GOVT OF QATAR PULLED OUT ALL CEREMONIAL STOPS FOR EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT'S FEB 27-28 STOPOVER IN DOHA. IN ADDITION TO USUAL AIRPORT FORMALITIES, THERE WAS LARGE PLACARD-WAVING, CHANTING CHEERING SECTION MADE UP FROM DOHA'S LARGE EGYPTIAN COMMUNITY. SADAT IS ONE OF FEW PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD WHO COULD BE SO RECEIVED HERE ON NORMALLY SACROSANCT FRIDAY HOLIDAY. AMIR PRESENTED SADAT WITH ORDER OF INDEPENDENCE, COUNTRY'S HIGHEST HONOR, AFTER HOSTING BANQUET WHICH INAUGURATED AMIR'S BRAND NEW LUXURIOUSLY DECORATED RECEIVING/BANQUET FACILITY. THE RED CARPET IS PASSE' IN QATAR--SADAT WAS WALKING ON NA'IM.
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PAGE 02 DOHA 00203 281149Z

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

2. IN HIS COMMENTS TO LOCAL PRESS, SADAT REPEATED FAMILIAR THEMES. HE SAID "STEP-BY-STEP" FORMULA NO LONGER VIABLE, AND INDICATED HE FAVORED RETURN TO GENEVA WITH PLO PARTICIPATION. SADAT STRESSED NEED TO "UNIFY ARAB RANKS", CRITICIZED ISRAELI "MANEUVERS" OBSTRUCTING SETTLEMENT, AND UNDERLINED GOE'S STEADFASTNESS ON PALESTINIAN CAUSE. HE SAID PRINCIPAL PURPOSES OF TRIP WERE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON CURRENT MIDEAST SITUATION AND TO EXPLAIN PRESENT DIFFICULTIES FACED BY GOE. HE TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO THANK AMIR AND PEOPLE OF QATAR FOR THEIR CONSISTENT AND GENEROUS SUPPORT.

3. RE SUBSTANCE, MOST PROMINENT QUESTION ON EVERYONE'S MIND HERE WAS "HOW MUCH WILL SADAT GET?", PARTICULARLY SINCE ANNOUNCEMENT OF $300 MILLION SAUDI GRANT. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD ME AT FEB 28 DEPARTURE CEREMONY THAT IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE TO BE ISSUED LATER TODAY, GOQ PLEDGED AID TO "UTMOST OF ITS ABILITY", BUT HE SAID NO SPECIFIC FIGURES MENTIONED. WHEN I PRESSED HIM FURTHER, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A DEFINITE FINANCIAL AID COMMITMENT, BUT HE SWORE THAT HE DID NOT RPT NOT KNOW THE AMOUNT.

4. RE ATMOSPHERICS, SADAT APPEARED VERY TIRED AND EGYPTIAN AMB CONFIRMED THAT HE INDEED WAS. AT OFFICIAL DINNER, SADAT COMPLETELY SHUNNED BANQUET FARE AND WAS SERVED SPECIAL FOOD BY HIS OWN PERSONAL VALET. HARDLY A WORD PASSED BETWEEN SADAT AND THE AMIR DURING DINNER, ALTHOUGH AMIR USUALLY LACONIC WHILE EATING. PERHAPS SPIRIT WAS DAMPENED BY PRESENCE AT HEAD TABLE OF FATAH LEADER KHALID AL HASSAN, WHO ALSO VISITING ON FUND-RAISING MISSION; HOWEVER HASSAN AND GOE FONMIN FAHMI CARRIED ON LIVELY CONVERSATION. ONE WONDERS WHAT SADAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THINKING, COMING TO QATAR WITH HIS HAT IN HIS HAND WHILE OBSERVING THE TRAPPINGS OF AFFLUENCE AND CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION--CUSTOM-MADE LIMOGES CHINA, MONOGRAMED STERLING, ETC. WE HOPE HE WENT AWAY HAPPIER THAN HE LOOKED.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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